

Application No. 09/481,207

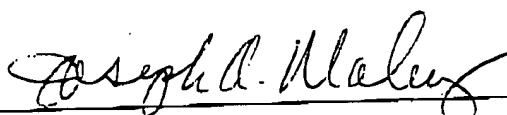
Page 2

In view of the above remarks, Applicant submits that all claims are allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect. As always, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned with questions or to otherwise expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: January 2, 2001

By:

  
Joseph A. Mahoney  
Registration No. 38,956  
SONNENSCHN NATH & ROSENTHAL  
P.O. Box 061080  
Wacker Drive Station, Sears Tower  
Chicago, Illinois 60606-1080  
(312) 876-3119